DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 162 438 EA 011 047

AUTHOR Broadnax, Walter D.
TITLE Executive Development: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs Within an Administrative Context.
PUB DATE [Nov 77]
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attitudes; Beliefs; Ethical Values; *Management Development; *Moral Values; Public Service Occupations
IDENTIFIERS Andragogy

ABSTRACT

Values, attitudes, and beliefs are frequently neglected in education for public service. It is difficult to teach these concepts in a traditional pedagogical manner. Instead, concentration on these concepts is more appropriate through the "andragogical" approach often used in executive development programs. "Andragogy" is based on the educational needs of the student and includes personal and affective feedback. Executive development is intended to help effective managers become more effective. Since attitudes spring from values that are enduring beliefs, values are more critical than attitudes or beliefs. The four critical stages of executive development are self-examination, self-expectations, hypothesis development, and hypothesis testing. During the self-examination stage, the executive looks inside to discover values, expresses them to another person, and receives feedback about them. During the self-expectations stage, the executive determines what kind of person he or she wishes to become. During the hypothesis development stage, the executive determines whether to change values and what values to change. During hypothesis testing, executives change their behaviors in accordance with their new values and determine how well the new values work in the real world. This new awareness of the relationship between values and behavior allows administrators to improve their effectiveness. (Author/JM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED162438

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT: ATTITUDES, VALUES, AND BELIEFS WITHIN AN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXT

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Walter D. Broadnax

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

BY

Walter D. Broadnax
The Federal Executive Institute
Charlottesville, Virginia

EA 011 047

Over the past fifty years, education for the public service has become a major academic/educational activity in the United States. Throughout this period, scholars and practitioners alike have wrestled periodically with issues concerning efficiency, effectiveness, reorganization, span of control and organization. Even though these issues have been recognized as being extremely germane, if not absolutely fundamental to the conduct of the public's business, the tendency has been to tackle those issues which most reasonably and readily lend themselves to the art of pedagogy while intellectually avoiding those issues and their attending concepts which do not so easily lend themselves to this approach. While concepts such as those mentioned above are abstract, variable, and often resistant to clear definition or easy application, they have traditionally been more easily managed by scholars and practitioners than have concepts such as values, attitudes, and beliefs.

The difficulty concerning concepts such as values, attitudes, and beliefs is not solely one of definition nor is it singularly related to the abstract nature of the concepts themselves. Rather, the difficulty has been one of how can we teach (pedagogically) future public servants values, attitudes, and beliefs which would contribute "positively" to the conduct of the public's business. Moreover, the business of attempting to transmit such ideas clearly and with the same facility that we have discovered that technical skills can be transmitted has proven to be very difficult.

Primarily, the traditional pedagogical approach practiced in the classical academic setting does not provide nor readily lend itself to the type of feedback mechanisms (personal and affective) necessary to assess the impact of the pedagogical effort on the individual nor its impact on the environment within which he will someday operate.

This particular effort will raise certain issues concerning values, attitudes, and beliefs relative to their potential influence within an administrative context. As has been pointed out, the typical pedagogical approach and its attending assumptions as well as the setting within which it is usually practiced does not afford one the maximum opportunity to assess, modify, or provide feedback concerning the influence nor potential influence of values, attitudes, and beliefs within an administrative context. Instead, the arena chosen for this examination is that of executive development where andragogy rather than pedagogy is the preferred approach to education for the public service. Andragogy, because it does rely heavily on the perceived educational needs of the student (adult) and because it is traditionally practiced in a setting where personal and affective feedback is possible and can be made meaningful, does afford one the opportunity as a teacher (facilitator) to assess, modify, or provide feedback concerning the influence or potential influence of values, attitudes, and beliefs within an administrative context.

Executive Development

Executive development for the public servant is a relatively new concept and activity. It has been only since 1968 that the federal government began an ongoing and concerted effort in the area of executive development, operated primarily for federal executives.[1]

The initial question which must be answered is -- what is executive development? Secondly, why does executive development afford us a greater opportunity to assess, modify or provide feedback concerning values, attitudes, and beliefs? And furthermore, what meaning, if any, does this have for the practice of public administration?

Executive development as an activity focuses its attention on those individuals, primarily professionals,[2] who have risen successfully to top managerial positions within various organizations. Its major thrust is organizational effectiveness, rather than individual success. Therefore, the key intended outcome is that the individual manager will be able to improve his managerial and personal skills such that he may become more effective in his efforts to accomplish various organizational goals and objectives.[3]

In executive development, the usual case is that the individual participating in the educational program has already demonstrated his individual skills and talents to the extent that he is already a successful executive. Here success means

that the individual has risen to the top or near the top of his organization usually by skillfully applying certain qualitative and quantitative skills acquired during his professional education.[4] On the other hand, effectiveness relates to the individual's ability through his skillful utilization of others to successfully attain the organization's goals and objectives.

The answer to why executive development affords us a greater opportunity to assess, modify, or provide feedback concerning values, attitudes, and beliefs is related to the concept of andragogy. As Ingalls suggests, andragogy is fundamental to the concept of executive development:

> ... The process of education, looked at in its broadest sense can be considered to be operating all the time, during all conscious human activity. It does not stop at graduation! Everything we do involves some kind of learning. Reflecting on the past, acting in the present, planning for the future, all clearly suggest the fundamental process of learning by doing. Possibly we do not look at all of life as a "learning experience" or a "learning situation." Perhaps our orientation restricts our thinking about education as that taking place only within the narrow confines of a formal classroom. But whether we wish to recognize it or not, the fact remains that we are learning all the time. Perhaps what we really need is an educational process that will help us to generate meaning and knowledge from our life situation in a way that we can utilize all of our activities as "potential for learning." In that way, even our mistakes can be valued as providing information leading to change and growth. Continuous learning from the experience of life, then, is an important focus for adults in today's world.[5]

It is clear, according to Ingalls, that executive development conducted following the principles of andragogy does not

simply address managerial issues to the exclusion of the executive and his life experiences since they too are central to the learning process. In other words, the executive's managerial role cannot possibly be played to the exclusion of who the executive is as an individual. Where the individual came from, where he now finds himself, and where he wishes to go in the future are all important aspects of executive development using the andragogical approach.

In an andragogical setting, attitudes, values and belief systems are the foundations upon which teachers and learners build a learning community and as they are surfaced, they are feedback systematically into the curriculum and the learning environment. It is through this process that the executive is afforded an opportunity to assess and/or modify those attitudes, values, and beliefs relative to his managerial role as well as other roles he may be required to perform in a broader societal context.

The significance of an andragogical approach to executive development for the practice of public administration may be found in the relationship between an individual executive's attitudes, values, and beliefs and his performance as a public executive. It is clear to those primarily engaged in the study of public administration as well as those primarily engaged in its practice that attitudes, values, and beliefs are critical components of what gets translated into public

programs. Furthermore, these same attitudes, values, and beliefs are extremely influential in the program execution and evaluation stages of public policy making.

The difficulty for public administration has not been a problem of understanding the importance. potential influence, or the significance of attitudes, values, and beliefs in the public policy making process; rather, it has been a problem of how does one assess, modify, or influence the impact of individual attitudes, values, and beliefs on public programs in an educational environment.

Executive development unlike pre-entry programs in public administration focuses its attention on executives who are familiar with managerial problems. Furthermore, they are successful administrators in that they have generally demonstrated their abilities concerning how to utilize many of the qualitative and quantitative skills necessary to reasonably performing their executive roles.

In the pre-entry, pedagogically oriented, educational programs for the public servant, the necessity of concentrating a large portion of the curriculum on cognitively based informational transmission type material prohibits more time and effort being devoted to the matter of attitudes, values, and beliefs. Furthermore, the managerial experiences of the students are often too limited for them to realistically assess the impact of certain personally held attitudes, values, and beliefs on the policy making process or on their particular

executive performances in the future.

To summarize, one of the most potentially meaningful aspects of executive development for the study and practice of public administration is in the area of attitudes, values, and beliefs assessment, and modification, or at least clarification vis-a-vis their influence or potential influence within the administrative environment. It is at this juncture that an individual executive appears to be most readily disposed (intellectually and emotionally) to making a sincere effort to come to grips with one of the most difficult problems we face in the field of public administration -- the relationships between attitudes, values, and beliefs and administrative-programmatic outputs.

The preceding discussion has focused on the relationship and to some extent the importance of attitudes, values, and beliefs for the study and practice of public administration and how executive development presents itself as a means of more effectively approaching the assessment, modification, and clarification of attitudes, values, and beliefs within an administrative context. Throughout this discussion, attitudes, values, and beliefs have been presented as three clearly distinct concepts. At this point, a clearer differentiation between these concepts will be developed.

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs Differentiated

Rokeach, one of the leading research psychologists in the field of social psychology who has maintained a continuing interest in attitudes, values and beliefs has the following to say concerning the matter of differentiating between these three concepts:

> A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. A value system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance. 6

Continuing the differentiation Rokeach states,

> ... all of a person's attitudes can be conceived as being value-expressive, and all of a person's values are conceived to maintain and enhance the master sentiment of self-regard -- by helping a person adjust to his society, defend his ego against threat, and test reality. 7

Following Rokeach closely, he further states,

> Values like all beliefs, have cognitive, affective, and behavioral components: (1) A value is a cognition about the desirable, equivalent to what Charles Morris (1956) has called a "conceived" value and to what Kluckhohn (1951) has called a "conception of the desirable." To say that a person has a value is to say that cognitively he knows the correct way to behave or the correct end-state to strive for. (2) A value is affective in the sense that he can feel emotional about it, be affectively for or against it, approve of those who exhibit positive instances and disapprove of those who exhibit negative instances of it. (3) A value has a behavioral component in the sense that it is an intervening variable that leads to action when activated. 8

Looking carefully at Rokeach's scheme for differentiating between attitudes, values, and beliefs, it becomes clear that the two central concepts are values and beliefs. Whereas, attitudes tend to spring from values which are enduring beliefs, the critical concept in the entire scheme seems to be the concept of values. Moreover, values are presented as having behavioral components in the sense that they act as intervening variables which tend to influence action when activated.

The issue of assessing attitudes, values, and beliefs relative to the conduct of the public's business is centrally concerned with behavioral outcomes. Furthermore, it concerns the relationship between behavior and those underlying values and value systems which when activated intervene, thus, influencing the final behavior or set of behaviors. It is those behaviors which most directly influence public policy making and the public policy making process. The crux of the discussion then revolves around the matter of executive development, values, and the public executive.

Values, Executive Development, and The Public Executive

The subject of values as related to the practice of public administration is probably less palatable than the subject of values related to the study of public administration. The reason for this difference basically involves the difference between action and observation. The scholar (observor) is

expected to focus more of his attention on the ought, rather than the is of public management. Whereas in the "real world" more attention is focused on the practical which usually translates into what will work most expediently in a given situation or at least it becomes a case of what Simon calls satisficing.[9] Therefore, the problem of bridging the gap between the ought and the is, in terms of values as related to public administration, is as great as the distance between the seminar room and the agency or bureau which constitutes the administrative context within which public policies are often formulated, executed, and evaluated.

The public executive has certain problems concerning values and the performance of his role which are rather specific, yet somewhat peculiar unto the public executive. For example, concepts such as the rule of law, equality, freedom, liberty, human dignity, and justice are part and parcel of his everyday existence. However, the situation or situations (contexts) within which these concepts arise do not always clearly indicate to the public executive which values come into play prior to his having to make a decision which may later become a program, rule or regulation. How then, in an educational sense, can the public executive improve his ability to wrestle with issues and problems which carry such value laden implications?

The suggestion here is that through executive development utilizing an andragogical rather than a pedagogical approach,

the public executive can improve his ability to wrestle with issues and problems which are often value laden in nature. There are four critical components in the process of executive development, when andragogically conducted, which afford the public executive an opportunity to improve his ability to manage such value laden issues and problems. They are (1) self-examination, (2) self-expectations, (3) hypothesis development, and (4) hypothesis testing.[10]

Self-Examination

The process of self-examination provides the executive with an opportunity to look at himself in the proverbial mirror. He may ask such questions as: Who am I? Where Do I Come From? What makes me tick? Moreover, what things are important (valuable) to me and what values do I possess in regard to certain things?

Although it is possible to examine one's self without the assistance of others, individuals rarely have the opportunity of receiving feedback concerning this examination. As with a mirror, when we describe ourselves to others in a structured way with the understanding that feedback is desired, we receive a reflection of who we are as seen by a more objective observer than ourselves. It is through this process that the executive can begin to discern who he is and what his attitudes are regarding a variety of issues. Moreover, through the process

of articulating certain attitudes, it becomes possible to examine those underlying values and some of their roots which may give rise to the attitudes having been articulated.

Given that the participants (students) engaged in this process are executives who function daily within an administrative context, the more relevant feedback can be provided. Furthermore, the feedback will tend to have greater validity for the individual performing the self-examination in that it is being provided by someone much like himself who functions in a similar environment.

An example of how important feedback may be in terms of surfacing one's values is the case of the public executive who was diametrically opposed to public welfare programs. His attitude was that there are many jobs today but people just do not wish to work. Once this attitude had been articulated along with pertinent data concerning the individual's background, it became clear to him and the other participants that because this individuals father had been totally unable to find work during The Great Depression, the security one should find in a job surfaced as a strongly maintained value. Furthermore, once it was recognized from whence this attitude came, the individual was then able to examine the issue in light of those expectations he had for himself.

11

Self-Expectations

Once the individual becomes clearer as to who he is, he may then ask: What do I need and/or desire? This portion of

the process focuses even more intensely on what the underlying values for certain kinds of attitudes and beliefs may be. Who am I? How did I get here? Where do I wish to be? These questions are linked together at this point in that having a better concept of who he is and how he arrived there, he may reasonably begin to establish where it is he wishes to go or what it is he wishes to become.

Hypothesis Development

Given this is who I am and who I wish to become, if I thusly modify my values based on self-examination and self-expectations, will I be ...? Although this hypothesis suggests possible change, the individual could discover at this stage that in light of his self-examination and his self-expectations, he does not wish to change or modify his values. In such a case, values clarification may have been sufficient as far as the individual executive was concerned. On the other hand, the individual now knowing what he does about certain of his values may choose to attempt a change or modification in his values or in a particular value. He would then proceed to the next stage of the process which is hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing may be a short or long term process for the individual executive. He may discover quite rapidly that his modified or changed value, values, or value system tends to influence his behavior in a manner that creates too many negative reactions within his environment. On the other

hand, his experience may be one of positive reinforcement concerning the modification or change he has effectuated.

Obviously, the acid test for the change or modification in values experienced by the individual executive will be the feedback he receives in the "real world" -- his administrative environment. This is not to say that the feedback received in the educational environment is not valid. It is only to say that the educational environment tends only to approximate the individual executive's day-to-day world of work.

The important aspect of the hypothesis testing phase is that it affords the individual the opportunity to examine those values surfaced in light of the administrative role or roles he plays. Therefore, he has an opportunity to change or at a minimum he has the advantage of values clarification which in either case provides the individual with an understanding of the influences his values may have or him (behaviorally) within an administrative context.

Conclusions

The thrust of education for the public service is to prepare individuals for public administration who will represent the best of what we desire for our country. We may argue about certain of those things which we either value or do not value as individuals, but we rarely have the opportunity to discuss individual values and their relationship to behavior as manifested in the administrative environment.

Andragogy as a method for assisting public executives to discover in a meaningful way the relationship between their values and their behavior as often expressed in attitudes exhibited within their administrative environments has been recommended here as one way of achieving what may have been initiated earlier in more pedagogical settings. Since the participants (students) are practicing public executives, the problems or potential problems surfaced concerning the relationship between their values and their behavior within an administrative context are much more meaningful to them in that it relates directly to getting the job done. The choice becomes whether he wishes to become a more effective administrator.

Public administration and public policy making are both highly value charged enterprises. We have long accepted in the field that the fact-value dichotomy does not obtain in the world of the practicing public administrator.[12] Executive development certainly is not the last word in our efforts as educators to help practitioners gain a firmer fix on the relationship between values and behavior, but executive development conducted on the basis of the principles of andragogy does afford us the opportunity to provide practicing public executives with an opportunity to assess, modify, clarify or change values which are surfaced, if they so desire.

Unlike the pedagogical approach, andragogy does not place the educator in the position where the student expects him to provide the answer. The answer or answers must be sought and

derived from the executive's own surfacing of values and self-expectations and then the testing of these in light of experience or experiences within an administrative context. At this point it is quite apparent to the executive that his values do influence his behavior in his administrative environment. He then has the opportunity to exercise more conscious control over the behavioral outcomes. This in turn affords him the opportunity to improve his administrative effectiveness.

References

1 This paper and the data for it come from experiences and observations at the Federal Executive Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia. The Institute is the only full-time, professionally staffed executive development facility for public executives in the United States.

2 See Frederick C. Mosher, Democracy and the Public Service, Oxford University Press, New York, 1968.

3 See J. Peter Groves, "Successful Management and Organizational Mugging," unpublished paper, presented in a Symposium on Careers at the meeting of the Western Division of the Academy of Management, April 1, 1977, Sun Valley, Idaho.

4 Graduate programs in public administration emphasize knowledge and skills development. Generally, the student is expected to demonstrate a certain level of mastery in skill areas of a quantitative and qualitative nature. The executives attending the Federal Executive Institute are supergrade (GS 16-18) civil servants who have demonstrated the highest proficiency in various technical areas prior to having reached the pinnacle of the civil service ranks.

5 John D. Ingalls, A Trainers Guide to Andragogy, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1972, p. 3.

6 Milton Rokeach, The Nature of Human Values, The Free Press, New York, 1973, p. 5.

7 loc. cit., p. 15.

8 op. cit., p. 7. Also see Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes and Values: A Theory of Organization and Change, Jossey-bass, San Francisco, 1968; N. T. Feather, "Value Change Among University Students," Australian Journal of Psychology, 1973, 25, 57-70; and N. T. Feather, "Similarity of Value Systems as a Determinant of Educational Choice at University Level," Australian Journal of Psychology, 1971, 23, 201-211.

9 See Herbert A. Simon, Models of Man. New York, Wiley and Sons, 1957.

10 Chong M. Pak, "Management Training Program: Federal Executive Institute (What Is Working and What Is Not)," unpublished paper prepared for faculty orientation. Pak is the Associate Director for Programs at the Federal Executive Institute.

11 This experience occurred during a workshop on the subject of values and executive performance at the Federal Executive Institute.

12 See Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior, Macmillan Company, New York, 1947 and Herbert A. Simon, Donald W. Smithburg, and Victor A. Thompson, Public Administration, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1950.